

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING

July 28, 2020

A Regular Meeting was held by the Grey Forest City Council of the City of Grey Forest, Texas on July 28, 2020 at 6:37 p.m. at the La Escondida Celebration Center, 9888 Escondida Road, Helotes, Texas 78023.

The following members present to-wit:

Mayor Mitch Thornton	Council member Sean Skaggs
Council member Susan Darst	Council member Geri Poss
Council member Kimberly Verity	Council member Jennifer Nottingham

Staff Present:

Chief Rene Rodriguez	City Secretary Shannan Kinsley
	Assistant to City Secretary Joni Baker

Citizen's Present:

Don Reddout	Donald Nettle
Madeline McCloskey	Susan Sloan
Kathleen McCloskey	Sunshine Baker
Myra Hanson	Kate Feist
Jeff Hanson	John Feist
Rebecca Galindo	Mandie Waldrop
Ramiro Galindo	Laura Chaffee
Tim Santy	Shelley Guajardo
Barbara Breazeale	Becky Locke
C. Stuart	

Call to Order – City Council Regular Session

Mayor Thornton called the regular meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

Opening Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States

(Mayor Thornton)

Consent Agenda Items

Minutes – Consideration and/or action regarding the approval of the minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of June 23, 2020 and Special City Council Workshop Meeting of July 11, 2020. *Mayor Thornton recognized Council member Skaggs who moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Council member Verity. The motion passed unanimously with Council members Nottingham and Poss voting for and no one voting no. Motion passed 4-FOR, 0-NO.*

Hearing of Residents

Mayor Thornton recognized the following who spoke:

- Laura Chaffee stated she is against postings on social media where people are being called names. It is unacceptable. She is against the Keep Grey Forest Historical signs. It looks like they are fighting, and

no one wants to lose the quaintness. There are many examples of historic structures being moved or reconstructed and they are still historic. She challenges everyone to take down the signs because we are all working together. We are all citizens of the same City and can disagree without being rude.

- Barbara Breazeale stated she would like to see trimming done on the sides of the road so that her children can walk home from school.
- John Feist reserved his time for later in the meeting.
- Becky Locke stated she would like to keep as much of the rock entrance at Grey Moss Inn as possible.
- Sunshine Baker reserved his time for later in the meeting.
- Don Nettle stated he would like to keep Grey Forest Drive as rustic and rural as possible. He would like to fix only the areas that need it and leave the rest alone.

Council member Susan Darst joined the meeting at 6:44 p.m.

Mayor Announcements – None.

June 2020 Monthly Financials

Mayor Thornton recognized Council member Verity who moved to accept the financials. The motion was seconded by Council member Poss. The motion passed unanimously with Council members Nottingham, Skaggs and Darst voting for and no one voting no. Motion passed 5-FOR, 0-NO.

Letter from Citizen

Mayor Thornton stated he was informed that the City Council Policies and Procedures state the Mayor will read aloud letters from citizens. Mayor Thornton read aloud an email from citizen Kelly Luckett. The email is available at Grey Forest City Hall to view.

Council/Staff Announcements – None.

Committee Announcements/Reports – None.

Grey Forest Community Board (GFCB) Update

Mayor Thornton recognized Madeline McCloskey who provided the following announcements:

- Pool has been cleaned out by GFU and they installed a new drain plug.
- GFU will be trenching the ball field to water the trees. James Swisher will be donating pipe.
- The drinking fountain will be installed today or tomorrow.
- The Board will be updating their portion of the City website.
- Continue to remove invasive trees and clear the creeks. The work is being done mostly by volunteers.
- Ligustrum trees on Park Road have been removed as they were outgrowing the native trees.
- The major project to end the fiscal year is clearing the creeks.
- The alcohol rental agreement and sanitizing policy for the Community Center has been changed.
- The next Board Meeting is August 6th. They will be going over the budget.

Senator Frank L. Madla, Jr. Natural Area Update

Mayor Thornton recognized Council member Nottingham who provided the following announcements:

- The Board changed their meetings to the 3rd Tuesday of the month. The next meeting is August 18th.
- The 2020 fundraiser has been changed to written solicitation for donations due to the circumstances.

- They are removing invasive trees at the park entrance. The next workday is August 15th.
- The City of San Antonio bought 76 acres for a park that will never be developed.

City Events and Announcements – None.

Board of Adjustment Update – None.

Police Department Activity Report

Chief Rene Rodriguez announced the June 2020 Monthly Report.

- 1146 hours worked, 5376 miles driven, 361 calls for service, summons 35/23 (citations), 36 total traffic stops and 12 warnings, 1 DWI.
- Received notification of grant approval for a 3rd grant just under \$10,000.
- Continues communication through STRAK to stock up on PPE supplies.
- He has provided a proposal of a step-by-step process to maintain work related messages/texts.

Public Works Announcements – None.

GFU Utility Announcements

Mayor Thornton stated he met with Jeff English. The utility is doing well however, is off on gas revenue on the commercial side of business due to the current circumstances. The water is doing fine.

Fire Department Report

Don Reddout provided the announcements of the June 2020 Department Incident Report.

- There were 4 calls for service for the month of June 2020; 3 Assist the Public and 1 Medical. Average Response Time 0.75 minutes. Average Personnel 2.

New Business:

1. Discuss Options to Consider Recycling in Grey Forest

Mayor Thornton recognized Kate Feist who provided the following information on recycling. Kate Feist stated she has been trying to bring back recycling to Grey Forest, but it has failed. She is hoping to incorporate the help of City Council in her efforts. The United States has mills in seven states that take our recycling. Texas never sent recycling to China. China is no longer taking recycling and the market has bottomed out. It is making little money, and some have a negative value. However, environmentally it is good to recycle. The landfills are filling up and the United States is the biggest producer in waste. There is an economic benefit to recycling. There is still value in cardboard, plastics, and aluminum. There is no value in glass. She believes every town in America has a duty to dispose of their waste responsibly. She feels there is a way to bring back recycling at no cost or little cost to the City. She would like to see citizens educated on how recycling works so the materials have value. Kate Feist provided Council a copy of her proposal.

- Curbside single stream. Cut back trash pickup to once a week. She is dedicated to educating the City.
- Community Dumpster with a combination lock with once a week service.
- Divide recycling materials into separate single bins which has the most value.

Kate Feist advised she is in discussion with Keep Texas Beautiful. They find ways to implement recycling programs in rural communities typically at no cost to the City. They help educate on what is recyclable and how to clean the materials. This would have to be organized through the City. Mayor Thornton stated basically

it is cheaper to buy virgin materials than using recyclable materials. City Council will need to consider the cost and bring it back to the next meeting.

2. Discuss and Act on Setting a Date for a Budget Workshop

The City Council Budget Workshop was set for Thursday, August 13, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

3. Discuss and Act on Recommendation from the Grey Forest Community Board for Board member Appointments

Mayor Thornton recognized Madeline McCloskey who stated applications of interest were submitted for two Board positions. The Board voted to present Peter Carey continue to serve in his current position and replacing Kristen Marshall with Shelly Guajardo. *Council member Verity made the motion to accept the two nominees. The motion was seconded by Council member Poss. Council members Nottingham, Skaggs and Darst voting for and no one voting no. Motion passed 5-FOR, 0-NO.*

4. Discuss and Act on Appointment of Council Liaison for the Grey Forest Community Board

Mayor Thornton stated Council member Skaggs is currently the Council Liaison. *Council member Nottingham nominated Council member Skaggs to be reappointed as the Council Liaison for the Grey Forest Community Board. The motion was seconded by Council member Darst. Council members Skaggs, Verity and Poss voting for and no one voting no. Motion passed 5-FOR, 0-NO.*

5. Discuss and Act on Recommendation from the Senator Frank L. Madla, Jr. Natural Area Board for Board Member Appointments

Mayor Thornton recognized Council member Nottingham who stated there are three positions for appointment. The Madla Board recommends reappointment of Kelly Dawley and Kate Feist for another term and appoint new member Anne McCarthy for a term. *Council member Poss made a motion to approve the nominations. The motion was seconded by Council member Verity. Council members Nottingham, Skaggs and Darst voting for and no one voting no. Motion passed 5-FOR, 0-NO.*

6. Discuss and Act on Appointment of Council Liaison for the Senator Frank L. Madla, Jr. Natural Area Board

Mayor Thornton recognized Council member Nottingham who stated the Madla Board would like to reappoint her as Council Liaison. She would appreciate reappointment. *Council member Poss made the motion to approve appointment and continue with Council member Nottingham. The motion was seconded by Council member Skaggs. Council members Verity and Darst voting for and Council member Nottingham abstaining. Motion passed 4-FOR, 1-ABSTAINING.*

7. Discuss Appointment of Mayoral Road Improvement Advisory Committee

Mayor Thornton recognized Council member Nottingham who will lead the committee. Council member Nottingham stated she would like to put forth Myra Hanson, Mandy Waldrop, Tim Santy, James Swisher, Aurelia Scharnhorst, and Rebecca Galindo. She has not had a chance to contact all the nominees so not all have agreed to be on the committee. Council member Verity stated she would like to recommend Phil Howard and Lynn Tiner. Mayor Thornton stated he would like to appoint five to the committee. Sunshine Baker stated he would like to put his name forward for the committee. He feels the City needs to have a process where citizens have the option to put their name in the hat for these types of projects. John Feist stated he would like to put his name forward. Mayor Thornton stated we will create a sign up sheet so that there are no conflicts. Council member Darst stated she feels anyone interested should be able to be on the committee, but she wants to know what the timeline is. She suggests 90 days for a presentation to Council. Council member Nottingham stated if

anyone is interested in the committee, see her after the meeting. Mayor Thornton stated he would like citizen input on road repairs and does not want anyone to feel like Council is doing anything behind closed doors. There are a lot of citizens that have expertise in project management, roads, engineers, etc. He would like this committee to look at the information Givler put out and outline the projects from the most serious to least serious issues. He would like the committee to put together a plan and bring their findings back to Council. Council will need to decide if they want to put it out for a Bond or try to fix the roads as we can afford it. Having citizen's input helps them not feel blindsided by what is going on. The deadline to sign up for the committee will be Friday with a statement of why you are interested.

8. Discuss and Act on Amending the City Council Policy and Procedures, Section 3.4.6, Citizen Interaction to Remove "The Mayor Will Read the Statement at the Meeting up to the Three Minute Cutoff Time"

Mayor Thornton stated the reasoning behind removing this is that sometimes the letters are caustic in nature. In addition, the meetings can go on and on. If Council approves the amendment, we can look at having John Chaffee set it up so the letters can be displayed on the City website. Council will still get a hard copy in their packets. Council member Verity stated she is tired of reading personal attacks. It is disrespectful. Council member Darst stated if the submittal specifically attacks somebody and it is not appropriate, then it should not be read. She expects everyone to be polite. *Council member Nottingham made the motion to remove from the Policies and Procedures, "The Mayor will read the statement at the meeting up to the three-minute cutoff time". The motion was seconded by Council member Poss. Council members Verity and Skaggs voted for and Council member Darst opposed the motion. Motion passed 4-FOR, 1-OPPOSED.*

9. Discuss and Act on 3 Way Stop Sign at Grey Forest Drive/Scenic Loop Road and 4 Way Stop Sign at Sherwood Trail/Scenic Loop Road

Mayor Thornton stated there are issues on this that need to be worked through. The State dictates stop signs and where you can put them. A stop sign cannot be put up to slow down traffic on a main thoroughfare. There are specific things that need to be approved before that can be done such as an engineering study. Council member Darst stated every time you put in a stop sign, you triple the wear and tear on the roadways. She would like to know how this will impact our brand-new roadway along Scenic Loop Road. Mayor Thornton stated this needs to be researched further. He will defer it to the City Engineer and City Attorney.

10. Discuss and Act on Moving Non-Essential Items to Consent Agenda Items

Mayor Thornton recognized Council member Darst who stated for the sake of efficiency, there should be a Consent Agenda. This is a section of the Agenda where multiple items can be approved at one time. She feels we spend a lot of time flipping through papers, looking at minutes and correcting grammatical errors. As Council, they need to come into the meetings prepared and having read through the items. It will save time and if anything is out of the normal, Council can pull the item and discuss if needed. Her proposal is to put the meeting minutes and financials in Consent Agenda. This will consolidate the meetings and allow Council to be more effective. Council member Verity stated she feels there can be more put on the Consent Agenda. *Council member Darst made the motion to approve the meeting minutes and financials be moved to a Consent Agenda Item starting next month. The motion was seconded by Council member Poss. Council members Nottingham, Skaggs and Verity voting for and no one voting no. Motion passed 5-FOR, 0-NO.*

11. Discuss and Act on Pursuing Low Cost Solution for Recording Council Meetings

Mayor Thornton recognized Council member Darst who proposed choosing a device to record Council Meetings. It can be a phone, tablet, or James Lee with The Echo for free. The recording can be uploaded

through YouTube to the City website and citizens can view Council meetings in its entirety. Mayor Thornton stated he spoke with James Lee and he can provide us a link to put the recording onto the website. Council member Nottingham asked if we could work with James Lee for a few months and see how it goes. Council member Verity feels we should ask the City Attorney on the liability of it all. Shannan Kinsley stated the City Attorney advised James Lee could record the meeting, but we would not be using him in an official capacity. We would still have the minutes as the official recording. Mayor Thornton stated we can put a disclaimer with the recording saying it was recorded free of charge by The Echo as a service to our citizens but for the official record, please review the minutes. *Council member Darst made motion that we agree to accept James Lee's offer of video taping our regular scheduled City Council Meetings for the next 3 months as we simultaneously pursue different options for where the videos will be stored, create an account, what devices they will be reported on and our exact procedures with the Official Record will always being the meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Council member Poss. Council members Nottingham, Skaggs and Verity voting for and no one voting no. Motion passed 5-FOR, 0-NO.*

Unfinished Business:

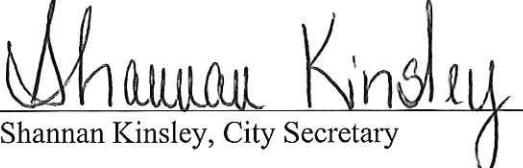
12. Discuss and Act on Implementing a Policy and Procedures to Address the Retention of Public Records for Use of Personal Electronic Devices and Compliance with SB944

Mayor Thornton stated this is to address texting because other communication is already captured in emails and can be part of the public record. We need to come up with a solution to capture text messages. We can get a cell phone and leave it at City Hall where anytime someone texts, you would include that phone number so it can be captured. There are also services that are text to email. He will research this option more, but we need to come up with a solution. Council member Nottingham stated she likes the first option. We need to be able to easily search the records on anything that has to do with City business. Chief Rodriguez stated he proposed the cell phone in his handout. Mayor Thornton stated it will be hard to go back and search the records with a cell phone. Council member Darst stated she feels this is an administrative matter and that the Mayor should decide what needs to be done. Once the Mayor makes the decision, Council can make the change to the policies. Council member Verity stated she feels the Mayor is wanting text to email. Mayor Thornton stated he will explore services that offer it and at a low cost. *Council member Nottingham made the motion to have the Mayor take the project and figure it out and let Council know his solution. There was further discussion. Council member Nottingham withdrew her motion. Council member Verity made the motion that Mayor Thornton seeks out different services to do text to email to be in compliance with SB944. The motion was seconded by Council member Skaggs. Council members Nottingham and Poss voted for and Council member Darst opposed the motion. Motion passed 4-FOR, 1-OPPOSED*

Adjournment

There was no further business. Mayor Thornton adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

ATTEST:


Shannan Kinsley, City Secretary


Charles Mitchell Thornton, Mayor